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From: Stacey Parker
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Subject: PRESS RELEASE 02/11/15 - We Love Mulching Trees

PRESS RELEASE



City of Norman
201 West Gray
Norman, Oklahoma 73069

For Immediate Release: February 11, 2015

Contact: Greg Huffman, City of Norman Tree Board Chairman, (405) 573-0100

WE LOVE MULCHING TREES

Mulching is one of the simplest ways to encourage healthy trees. Mulch helps reduce soil compaction, erosion, and weed competition. Mulch can also reduce water evaporation, which is especially important during hot Oklahoma summers when the water evaporates before the tree can absorb it, no matter how much you water.

To apply mulch, there are three basic principles:

- 1) It is better to mulch broadly, rather than deeply. A broader mulched area will be able to retain more moisture for the roots and prevent more weeds. For a tree that has a trunk the width of a golf ball, a mulch circle of at least 6 feet in diameter is recommended. A depth 2-4 inches is sufficient. Do not make your mulch too deep, as this will cut off water to the tree. If you are reapplying mulch, even for aesthetic purposes, make sure the previous layer has decomposed. The exception to this rule is around construction sites where equipment will cause soil compaction. In this case, temporarily adding 6-12 inches can help trees survive, but it must be removed or dispersed into a 2-4 inch layer before too long. Also, do not place plastic under the mulch, this will restrict the amount of water and oxygen that gets to the tree.
- 2) Do not let the mulch crowd the tree. If the mulch is in direct contact with the trunk of the tree it could lead to infection or fungus. Leave some space around the base.
- 3) Organic mulches are favorable because, over time, they improve the aeration, fertility and nutrients in the soil around your tree as they decompose. Common organic mulches include bark or hardwood chips, pine needles, and nut shells. You can also use straw, leaves, and lawn clippings, however, these will break down more quickly and require you to replenish more often.

Done properly, mulching can be one of the least expensive and beneficial ways to show love for your trees!

For more information or questions on caring for trees, please contact Greg Huffman, Chairman, City of Norman Tree Board, at 405-573-0100

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